

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An optical pickup device has an irradiation optical system for focusing a light beam to form a spot on a track on an information recording surface of an optical recording medium, and a light detection optical system for leading return light reflected back from the spot to a photodetector. The optical pickup device also has a focus error detecting optical element and a photodetector. The focus error detecting optical element has an area quadrisected into first through fourth quadrants from the center of an optical path of the return path along two division lines extending corresponding to a direction in which the track extends and a direction perpendicular to the extending direction on a plane substantially perpendicular to the optical path of the return path, for applying the return light passing through adjacent ones of the areas on the same side of the division line with astigmatism in directions rotated by 90° from each other about the optical path, and for separating the return light into at least four corresponding to the areas. The photodetector has a plurality of spaced light receiving elements for receiving the separated return light, each of which has contour lines corresponding to the division lines on an image plane on which a light beam is shaped into a circular beam in the optical system in which the astigmatism is applied, and comprised of two light receiving areas divided by a bisect line extending substantially in parallel with one of the contour lines.